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February 24, 2000

Mr. Vernon A. Williams, Secretary  
Surface Transportation Board  
Office of the Secretary  
Case Control Unit  
Attn: STB Ex Parte No. 582  
1925 K Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20423-0001

Office of the Secretary

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Part of  
Public Record

Dear Sir,

Agricore is a farmer-owned agricultural-based company that is one of the largest rail shippers in Canada with extensive rail shipments also in the U.S.. The purpose of this letter is to comment on the issues to be discussed on March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2000 in Ex Parte 582.

Agricore has not yet had the opportunity to fully assess the impacts of the proposed CN-BN Combination on its business. We do, however, believe that the transaction has potential benefits for shippers in terms of faster transit times, shorter, more efficient routings and improved market reach. We urge the Surface Transportation Board to proceed to review it on its merits.

The Surface Transportation Board has a comprehensive process to evaluate railroad transactions and protect the public interest. It should fairly evaluate the CN-BNSF Combination according to that process. Do not let other railroads use the Surface Transportation Board process to protect themselves and not shippers.

Sincerely,

Neil Silver  
President